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To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: United States v. Microsoft

As a citizen, I would like to make my comments about this case. I have been in the computer field for over 7 years.

First, the largest portion of the "penalty" is in licensing costs. How much is Microsoft really losing by "donating" these licenses? It's already been stated that these are under-privileged schools which probably couldn't afford to buy computers and software on their own. Microsoft is simply getting increased market penetration with minimal loss of revenue. I think I read that support contracts for these schools would be negotiated and given a discounted rate, (i.e. not free). Anything they would lose in licensing they're going to make up in new support contracts.

Secondly, it's a well established marketing strategy to give software to schools so the students learn the applications, then take that into the marketplace when they look for a job. For exmaple, Adobe has used this for a great advantage. Ignoring the fact that PhotoShop and Illustrator are supremely awesome applications, they give the software away to universities so the majority of graduates know these packages. This encourages companies recruiting graphic artists to use these applications because there's no learning curve for new hires. The CEO of RedHat made a public offer to donate the Operating Systems (OS) for these machines *with support* and Microsoft could donate just the hardware. This would mean more schools would get computers and Microsoft would not be furthering their own interests. Please consider this CEO's offer and put another OS on these systems (ie. not Microsoft)!

Finally, the debate on whether or not they have a monopoly is closed, the courts already ruled that they do! Not only do they have the monopoly, but they've abused it and that's why we are discussing their punishment. I hope you will consider a stronger punishment for Microsoft!!